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ABSTRACT

A study of the different perceptual frameworks of the major parties involved in strategic nuclear policy was conducted by examining the interaction between the Executive Branch, Congress, and the informed public. Public political communication data were gathered from public documents generated by Congress and the Executive branch, and by examining selected letters to newspapers. Strategic themes cited in relationship to strategic subjects in the communications were identified. Subjects and themes were coded as nearly as possible in the original words used, and these were then collapsed into four subject areas and six themes, providing a category system for statistical analysis. Results indicate that the three major groups have widely different priorities and perspectives on strategic policy. The Executive branch takes a world-wide view and is most concerned with the effects of an issue on negotiations and international relationships. Congress's concern is with such practical matters as cost-effectiveness, and the public's perspective is vague and general. Such divergence, it is hypothesized, contributes to the often conflict-prone nature of strategic debate, although unity was found in a universal desire for stability. (DF)

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The Political Communication of Strategic Nuclear Policy

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The Political Communication of

Strategic Nuclear Policy

The Carter Presidency represents a watershed point for America's strategic future. Several vital decisions are being made that will determine the course of strategic policy for at least the next decade. Decisions concerning the future of a plethora of specific weapon systems are being reached. Beyond specific nuclear weapons, international negotiations are being held that will dictate the strategic relationships between the world's superpowers.

However, President Carter serves only as a focal point for developing and representing American policy. Significant influence is also wielded by three other groups: Congress, the informed public, and the Armed Services. Congress is able to control specific weapons via its power over appropriations. The ABM controversy of the 1960's and the B-1 bomber/cruise missile battle of the 1970's indicate the strength of Congressional power. The Senate exerts control over international treaties by being able to block agreements with a one-third plus one vote. The current SALT II negotiations are being conducted with the impending Senate battle serving as an important background factor.

The informed public impacts on strategic policy through three major channels of communication: formal, informal, and confrontation. The public often influences strategic decisions through testimony at Congressional hearings and participation in Executive conferences.

Admiral Rickover (U.S.N. ret.) often testifies at Congressional hearings concerning the sea-based units of the US nuclear arms triad. Paul Newman, actor and citizen activist, was appointed a delegate to the U.N. Disarmament Conference of 1978. Additionally, the public en masse influences strategic decisions through a wide variety of informal communication channels, ranging from letters to private conversations. Finally, the informed public impacts on policy through confrontation. The recent Clamshell Alliance demonstration against the Trident weapon system is an example of this process.

The military's ability to participate in the public decision-making process is hampered by the President's role as Commander-in-Chief. Public debate over strategic policy, in other than formal channels, is strictly forbidden. General Singlaub was forced to resign when he publicly expressed disagreement with the President's strategic policy decisions. Military opinion can be expressed through three channels. First, military opinion can be expressed through official Administration documents in support of Executive Branch positions. Secondly, opinion may be expressed through public media. However, it is expected that speeches and articles will be cleared with higher officials. Failure to obtain such a preview and to make suggested changes can result in the end of a military career. Finally, opinion may be expressed at Congressional hearings. It is only in this formal setting that disagreement with Executive Branch policy may be publicly expressed with a large degree of impunity. Because the military's access to public expression of opinion is severely limited, they will not be considered as a separate political force in this paper. The military will be considered as part of the Executive Branch

with dissent expressed via Congressional opinion and intra-Administration discussions.

Strategic nuclear policy is thus the result of the interaction between these major political forces. Studies of the interaction process are extremely important. In no other area of policy determination can a wrong decision result in such dire consequences as the destruction of national entities and the death of hundreds of millions of people around the world. Even excluding such extreme possibilities, errors in strategic policy could at a minimum produce international setbacks for American foreign policy (Kahn, 1975).

One major source of conflict in any decision-making process can be the maintenance of different perceptual frameworks by the major parties involved (Keltner, 1975). This paper will attempt, through content-analytic methodology, to delineate the perceptual framework of the major political forces. The public political communication of the three relevant groups will be the data base for this project. Finally, hypotheses will be generated as to the role that the identified differences in orientation play in the generation of conflict within the strategic policy decision-making process.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

As noted previously, the public political communication of the three relevant groups will constitute the raw data for this project.

Congress. The Congressional Record (January-March, 1978) served as the source of Congressional public political communication, since it is the official public record for all members of Congress. All

statements pertaining to strategic issues that were recorded in the 'Extension of Remarks' (House of Representatives) and 'Additional Statements' (Senate) sections formed the sample of Congressional public political communication. The sample had broad representation of members of both chambers of Congress, from all geographical, partisan, and ideological sectors of society. No apparent bias in terms of who makes use of these sections was detected. There were fifty-one relevant statements by Representatives and thirty-five by Senators.

Executive Branch. Two sources were used to create a sample of political communication by the Executive Branch: The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (January-March, 1978); and the Department of State Bulletin (January-April, 1978). The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents provides the most complete record of all Presidential statements in their original form. The Department of State Bulletin has been cited as "the primary source of policy articulations from the middle as well as the upper levels of the diplomatic bureaucracy," since it is the "official organ of the executive agency most deeply involved in foreign policy" (Singer, 1964, p. 431). The month of April was added to the DOSB since there is often a one month lag between the date of occurrence and publication of an Executive Branch statement. The DOSB contributed twenty-one statements and the WCOPD yielded another twenty-eight for the sample of Executive Branch political communication.

Informed Public. Letters to the Editor from five papers with wide readership from various regions of the country provided the sample of political communication from the informed public. The five newspapers

selected were: Washington Post; St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Chicago Tribune; New York Times; and Los Angeles Times. Foster and Friedrich (1937) have suggested that "letters to the editor, when taken together, provide us with. . . a thermometer, indicating the amount of 'heat' . . . which a certain issue is generating. A cross-section of a fair number of newspapers will, through their letters-to-the-editor columns, indicate the extent to which interest is being aroused" (p. 72). More specifically, Tarrant (1957) cites letters to the editor as a forum of discussion for the informed public. He finds letter writers to be "above average in such significant areas as education, social stability, economic status, religious interest, and many other 'peculiarly important' respects." (p. 502). Finally, the fact that letters which are 'anti' in position are more likely to be published (Davis & Rarick, 1964) does not affect the validity of the project. The paper is primarily concerned with identifying the relevant criteria used to make position decisions, not the actual strategic position per se. Nine letters were from the Washington Post, twelve from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, twenty-six from the Chicago Tribune, eleven from the New York Times, and twenty-six from the Los Angeles Times.

Category Systems

The specific content analytic procedure is contingency analysis as described by Holsti (1969). When a strategic subject is located within a segment of political communication, the relevant strategic themes cited in relationship to the subject are identified. For example, a Congressman could deliver a speech in support of the Trident submarine program on the basis of cost-effectiveness. The content analytic technique of contingency analysis was applied to two levels of category

systems: first on a raw data level; secondly, on a more abstract category system.

Category System One. In the first stage of analysis, the subjects and themes of the political communication were coded as nearly as possible in the words used in the original data. The category system was dictated by the subjects' choice of wording. Thirty-seven subjects and twenty themes. Intercoder reliability for the initial categorization is .94 for the delineation of strategic subjects and .86 for the delineation of strategic themes. The major cause of intercoder disagreement centered on whether particular statements about the Panama Canal treaty debate were considering the Panama Canal as a Forward Base System. The identified subjects and themes with a brief definition of each are as follows:

1. Arms Race. The increasing development and deployment of new and potentially more lethal strategic weapon systems.

2. Arms Sales. The sale of weapons to foreign countries. Only political communication that specifically considered strategic weapon systems or weapon systems capable of affecting the strategic relationship between the US and the USSR were included in the sample.

3. Arms Transfers. The transfer of weapons to a foreign country without payment required. The restrictions that applied to Arms Sales topics also apply to Arms Transfers.

4. Backfire Bomber. A manned Russian bomber capable of delivering nuclear warheads.

5. B-52. A manned US bomber capable of delivering nuclear warheads.

6. B-1. A manned US bomber designed to replace the B-52.

7. B-77. A tactical nuclear bomb designed to replace aging American stockpiles in Europe.

8. Civil Defense. Measures designed to protect the populace and industry during a nuclear war.

9. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. An international treaty to ban all testing of nuclear weapons. Current treaty only bans above-ground testing.

10. Cruise Missile. A short to medium range missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead with extreme accuracy.

11. Defense Spending. General considerations regarding US defense expenditures on strategic weapons.

12. Detente. A reduction of the Cold War between the US and the USSR and the acceptance of mutual co-existence.

13. Ethiopia/USSR. Statements concerning the developing relationship between Ethiopia and the USSR and the impact on the strategic balance of power.

14. Ethiopia/USSR/SALT. Linking SALT negotiations to the Ethiopian-USSR relationship being ended.

15. F111H. A modification of the present F111. Proposed as a replacement for the B-52 and the cancelled B-1 Bomber.

16. Indian Ocean Talks. Negotiations between the US and USSR on the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean.

17. ICBM Vulnerability. The ability of missile silos to protect their ICBMs during a nuclear war.

18. Killer Satellites. Satellites capable of destroying other satellites.

19. Mutual Assured Destruction. The ability of one country to inflict irreparable damage upon another country even after absorbing a first strike of nuclear weapons.

20. Mutually Balanced Force Reductions. Negotiations to reduce the forces and weapons of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

21. Naval Build-up. Proposals to increase the strategic war fighting capability of the US Navy.

22. Naval Carriers. Specific proposal to increase the size of the US carrier force. These carriers are capable of supporting nuclear weapon delivery systems.

23. Neutron Bomb. An enhanced radiation nuclear bomb. The bomb minimizes blast and maximizes radiation.

24. Non-proliferation Act. US law designed to safeguard exports of US nuclear technology so that ownership of strategic nuclear weapons will not spread.

25. Non-proliferation Treaty. International treaty designed to halt the spread of nuclear weapons.

26. NATO. A military alliance of European and North American countries.

27. Nuclear exports. Sending US nuclear technology to other countries.

28. Panama Canal Treaties. Treaties between the US and Panama to return sovereignty of the Canal Zone to Panama. Only those political statements that considered the treaty issue in terms of strategic importance were accepted into the sample.

29. Polaris Submarines. The present generation of nuclear-powered submarines capable of launching long-range SLBMs.

30. Proliferation. The spread of nuclear weapons to other countries.

31. Qualitative Improvements. Improvements in accuracy or kill power of present strategic weapon systems.

32. SALT. Negotiations between the US and USSR on reducing or limiting strategic weapons.

33. Trident Submarine. A nuclear powered submarine designed to replace the Polaris submarine.

34. Turkey Arms Embargo. A Congressional prohibition of selling weapons to Turkey. Only statements which consider this issue in a strategic fashion were included in the sample.

35. USSR/Africa. The impact of increasing USSR influence on the continent of Africa and the impact on the strategic balance of power.

36. USSR/ICBMs. The USSR strategic missile systems.

37. MX Missile. A US mobile land-based ICBM.

THEMES

1. Annihilation. The destruction of national entities and civilization as a consequence of nuclear war.

2. Cost. The capital outlay required for strategic weapons. Often used in conjunction with what the US must forgo in order to pay for strategic weapon systems.

3. Cost-effectiveness. Getting the most effective weapon for the least cost.

4. Deterrence. Convincing another country that they would suffer irreparable harm if they launched a nuclear first strike against your country.

5. Disarmament. The elimination of strategic weapon systems.

6. Escalation. An increasing spiral of developing strategic weapon systems in order to match your enemy's perceived strategic weapon capabilities.

7. First Strike. Being the first to launch an all-out nuclear strike. This strike is designed to prevent the enemy from being able to inflict severe damage to you after the first strike has occurred.

8. Flexibility. The ability to avoid being locked into predetermined strategic decisions. Maximizes potential alternatives to all-out nuclear war.

9. Forward Base Systems. Military bases in foreign countries. These bases allow the use of short-range strategic weapons to strike distant opponents with minimal warning time. An example is US bases in West Europe.

10. Futility. The utter senselessness of developing strategic weapons. Cites the impossibility of either side gaining enough superiority to mount an effective first strike.

11. Holocaust. The end of the human race as a consequence of nuclear conflict.

12. Humanity. The application of moral principles to strategic decisions.

13. Linkage. The introduction of non-strategic issues into SALT negotiations.

14. Overkill. The maintenance of more weaponry than is needed to effectively eliminate opposing national entities.

15. Parity. The maintenance of equivalent strategic weapon capabilities. Equivalent to Balance.

16. Proliferation. The spread of strategic nuclear weapons to other countries.

17. Second Strike. Launching a nuclear attack after sending or receiving a first strike.

18. Stability. Avoiding generating escalation, proliferation, or increased potential for war.

19. Superiority. Attempting to achieve overwhelming strategic balance in weapon systems.

20. Verification. Methods of checking that treaty accords are being followed. Includes as a sub-category 'treaty violations'.

Category System Two. Coding subjects and themes in the words of the selected political statements did not sufficiently code the data into units suitable for statistical analysis. Additionally, the amount of difference between the categories varies extremely. For example, the difference between a Polaris submarine and a Trident submarine is just a matter of a generation's technological development. However, the difference between Indian Ocean Talks and ICBM Vulnerability is much more substantial. Therefore, the initial categories taken from the political communication were collapsed into more productive categories.

Students at the Mershon Center for Strategic Study, located at The Ohio State University, collapsed the preceding themes and subjects into four subject areas and six themes. This second category system provides the basis for statistical analysis. The identified subjects and themes are as follows:

SUBJECTS

1 SPECIFIC WEAPON SYSTEMS. This subject area includes any communication that examines a weapon system in and of itself. When weapon systems can be either strategic or tactical in nature, only those statements that consider the system as a strategic weapon are included. Included sub-categories are: B-1 Bomber, Neutron Bomb, Civil Defense Systems, MX Missile, Naval Carriers, Tridents, Cruise Missile, Polaris Submarines, Killer Satellites, Backfire Bombers, USSR ICBMs, B-77, B-52, F111H, ICBMs and NATO.

2. GENERAL SYSTEMS. This subject area includes any communication that examines strategic weapons in a collective fashion. Included sub-categories are: Arms Reduction, Arms Race, Defense Budget, and Disarmament.

3. STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS, TREATIES, AND THEMES. This subject area includes any communication that examines efforts, mainly by the US and USSR to reduce/control strategic weapon systems and to reduce/control enmity between the superpowers. Included sub-categories are: Detente, CTB Treaty, SALT, Indian Ocean Talks, Panama Canal Treaties, Mutual Assured Destruction, and MBFR.

4. BALKANIZATION. This subject area includes any communication that examines the division of the world into hostile camps and the spread of strategic weapon capabilities to these other countries. Included sub-categories are: Arms Sales, Arms Transfers, Turkey Arms Embargo, Ethiopia/USSR, Africa/USSR, Nuclear Exports, Proliferation, The Nonproliferation Act, and The Nonproliferation Treaty.

THEMES

1. Stability. The theme considers the maintenance of the status quo relationship with the USSR. The theme mainly evolves around a desire to maintain equivalent strategic capabilities. Included sub-categories are: Superiority, Detente, Parity, Escalation, Balance, Proliferation, Stability, Disarmament, and Linkage.

2. Cost-effectiveness. This theme involves the consideration of receiving the maximum benefits from each dollar spent for strategic weapons. Included sub-categories are: Cost-effectiveness and Overkill.

3. Cost. This theme involves the consideration of the sheer cost of maintaining and developing strategic weapon systems. Often involves the argument that other concerns could make better use of the funds.

4. War Potential. This theme considers the war-fighting capabilities of a nation and the ability to induce an opponent not to launch a first strike. Included sub-categories are: First Strike, Second Strike, Deterrence, Forward Bases, and Flexibility.

5. Holocaust. The theme involves concern over anticipated doom as a result of strategic weapons and the inability of any country to get a strategic advantage that is enough to reduce the threat. Included sub-categories are: Annihilation, Holocaust, Devastation, and Futility.

6. Verification. This theme is concerned with the ability to check that treaty accords are not violated. It includes treaty violations per se as a topic.

RESULTS

Table I presents the data as categorized with the second category system. Chi Square analysis was used to determine significant relationships within and between the groups. The results are as follows:

Public

(1) The public is interested in strategic topics in a general fashion. In the second categorization, the second category, general systems, was the most common. 43% of the subjects, almost double the second largest category, were concerned with the arms race or defense spending in general. These two specific categories, the arms race and general defense spending, were the first and third most common categories in the first categorization. This interest in strategic topics in a general sense is significant at the .01 level.

(2) The public is not overly interested in the Balkanization of the world. This lack of interest is significant at the .01 level. No subtopic of Balkanization in the first categorization was the subject of more than two letters.

(3) Interest in strategic arms talks and specific weapons is not significantly different than what would be expected by chance. However, as a sub-topic, the public was exceptionally concerned with SALT. SALT was the second highest category in the first categorization.

TABLE I

	Public	Theme	Congress	Theme	Administration	Theme
Specific Weapons	19	1-08 2-05 3-02 4-03 5-05 6-00	62	1-32 2-19 3-07 4-01 5-21 6-01	28	1-14 2-01 3-02 4-00 5-19 6-00
General Systems	38	1-14 2-08 3-08 4-11 5-03 6-00	14	1-09 2-01 3-02 4-05 5-03 6-00	5	1-03 2-01 3-01 4-01 5-01 6-00
Strategic Arms Talks	26	1-09 2-00 3-00 4-03 5-14 6-04	49	1-18 2-01 3-04 4-02 5-20 6-19	39	1-26 2-00 3-03 4-08 5-09 6-07
Balkanization	5	1-03 2-00 3-00 4-00 5-02 6-00	14	1-11 2-00 3-00 4-00 5-03 6-00	26	1-24 2-00 3-04 4-01 5-01 6-00

(4) The public is most concerned with the strategic theme of stability. One of every three themes mentioned was concerned with stability. Parity specifically was the most frequent theme in the first categorization. This concern is significant at the .01 level.

(5) The public is not overly concerned with verification. This lack of interest is significant at the .10 level. Only 4% of the themes mentioned related to verification.

(6) Except for verification and parity, all other themes did not significantly differ from chance levels.

(7) In the public's opinion, stability is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support weapon systems in general or not. Verification is the least important of the strategic themes. The other four themes do not significantly vary from chance distribution.

(8) In the public's opinion, potentiality of war is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support strategic arms talks or not. No other theme significantly varies from chance distribution.

(9) There is no significant variation in theme distribution in the public's reaction to specific weapon systems.

(10) The N was not sufficient to permit a Chi Square analysis on the public's theme reaction to Balkanization.

Congress

(11) Congress tends to be concerned with strategic topics in a very specific fashion. In the second categorization, the first category, specific weapons, was the most common. 44% of the topics were concerned with the various weapon systems currently under debate. The B-1 Bomber and the MX Missile were the third and fourth most common subjects in the first categorization. These findings are significant at the .001 level.

(12) The Congress is not exceptionally interested in either Balkanization or general systems. This finding is significant at the .01 level. However, although the general categories were significantly below chance distribution, two sub-categories were important to Congress. Specifically, nuclear exports and defense spending were tied as the fifth most common subjects in the first categorization.

(13) Interest in strategic arms talks is not significantly different than chance. However, two sub-categories in the first categorization were of paramount importance. SALT and the Panama Canal Treaties were the first and second most common categories, respectively.

(14) The Congress is most concerned with the strategic theme of stability. One out of every three themes mentioned was concerned with stability. Parity specifically was the most frequent topic in the

first categorization. This concern is significant at the .001 level.

(15) The Congress is not overly concerned with the strategic theme of holocaust. This lack of interest is significant at the .01 level. Only 4% of the themes mentioned related to the holocaust.

(16) The other themes did not significantly vary from chance distribution.

(17) In the opinion of Congress, stability is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support a specific weapon or not. The holocaust and verification themes are the least important of the strategic themes. The other three themes do not significantly vary from chance distribution.

(18) In the opinion of Congress, stability is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support weapon systems in general. None of the other themes vary significantly from chance.

(19) In the opinion of Congress, all of the themes except cost are equally important in their decision as to whether they should support strategic arms talks or not.

(20) The N was not sufficient to permit a Chi Square analysis on Congress' theme reaction to Balkanization.

Administration

(21) Of all the strategic subjects, the administration is most concerned with strategic arms limitation talks. Over one-third of all subjects are related to strategic talks/treaties in the second categorization. Three of the top five topics in the first categorization, SALT, Panama Canal Treaties, and CTB Treaty, were sub-topics of this category. This concern is significant at the .01 level.

(22) The administration is not interested in strategic topics in a general fashion. This finding is significant at the .05 level. No sub-topic in the first categorization was considered more than twice.

(23) Interest in specific weapons and Balkanization did not vary significantly from chance distribution. However, two sub-topics of Balkanization--arms sales and USSR/Africa--were among the five most common topics in the first categorization.

(24) The administration is most concerned with the strategic theme of stability. One-half of all themes mentioned was related to stability. Parity and escalation, two sub-topics of stability, were the first and fourth, respectively, common themes in the first categorization. This concern is significant at the .001 level.

(25) The administration is not overly concerned with the strategic theme of cost. This lack of interest is significant at the .01 level. Only 2% of the themes mentioned related to cost.

(26) The other themes did not significantly vary from chance distribution.

(27) In the opinion of the administration, potentiality of war is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support a specific weapon system or not. The other five themes do not significantly vary from chance distribution.

(28) In the opinion of the Executive Branch, stability is the most important theme in their decision as to why they choose to support strategic arms talks. None of the other themes vary significantly from chance distribution.

(29) In the opinion of the administration, stability is the most important theme in their decision as to whether they should support Balkanization or not. None of the other themes vary significantly from chance distribution.

(30) The N was not sufficient to permit a Chi Square analysis on the administration's theme reaction to general systems.

Comparative

The following results are the result of a multi-level Chi Square analysis of subject distribution variance across all three groups.

(1) The distribution of specific weapon subjects varies significantly from chance at the .05 level. Congressional concern with specific weapons and the lack of public concern are the primary sources of variance.

(2) The distribution of general systems subjects varies significantly from chance (.001>p). The public's concern (.001>p) and the lack of the administration's concern (p=.02) are the major sources of variance.

(3) There is no significant variation in the distribution of strategic arms limitation talks.

(4) The distribution of Balkanization subjects varies significantly from chance (.01>p>.001). The administration's concern (p=.02) is the major source of variance.

The following results are the result of a multi-level Chi Square analysis of theme distribution variance across all three groups.

(5) The three major groups did not differ significantly in theme choice except for the public's concern (p=.02) for the possibility of a holocaust.

(6) There is no significant difference in which themes the three groups use to decide whether to support specific weapons or not.

(7) There is no significant difference in which themes the three groups use to decide whether to support general systems subjects or not.

(8) There is no significant difference in which themes the three groups use to decide whether to support strategic arms talks or not.

(9) There is no significant difference in which themes the three groups use to decide whether to support Balkanization topics or not.

Discussion

The results indicate that the three major groups have widely different priorities and perspectives on strategic policy. The administration has the responsibility for conducting international policy, negotiating treaties, etc. Thus the Executive Branch takes a world-wide view in its perception of strategic issues. The administration is most concerned with how an issue will affect negotiations and international relationships.

Congress, who must examine appropriation bills, treaties and executive agreements in detail are thus more concerned with the 'nuts and bolts' aspects of strategic policy. Problems with policy in general and Balkanization are downplayed and issues concerning specific weapons are highlighted. The theme of cost-effectiveness is very important to Congress as they analyze various proposed weapon systems.

The public's perspective is much more vague. Concern centers around strategic topics in a general fashion, such as the arms race and general defense spending. This perhaps reflects the public's isolation from the 'real' decision-making process. Access to secret arms negotiations and semi-private Congressional committee meetings is very limited.

Because these three perspectives vary considerably, reaction to strategic topics is often conflict prone. The recent B-1 bomber debate suffices as an example. The Carter Administration vacillated as it tried to determine how the USSR would react to the B-1. Congress

quickly boiled the issue down to a question of cost-effectiveness comparisons between the 'rival' cruise missile and B-1 bomber weapon systems. The public divided into three camps: those who thought the B-1 would trigger a new arms race, those who thought we needed the B-1 to retain parity, and those who didn't care. The result was a lengthy, sometimes rancorous, public debate that finally resulted in the end of the B-1 bomber program.

However, one common strand of perspective unites all three groups, the desire for stability. Although the SALT negotiations were not particularly salient during the time period studied, all three groups displayed hightened interest in the SALT negotiations. They were always the first or second most common topics in the first categorization. To the authors' surprise no group calls for US superiority. All just want rough equivalence of power.

Beyond SALT talks, the Congress seems to be content with allowing the Executive Branch to set the timetable for strategic policy debate and consideration. Congress tends to be concerned with issues only when they have an immediate stake in the proceedings, such as granting appropriations approval. Thus the Executive Branch would seem to have an advantage of timing during strategic policy debates (with the dubious assumption of general control of information leaks).

Finally, no group appears to be exceptionally concerned with the risk of Holocaust. The holocaust theme did not evoke extreme interest, nor did the specific topic of Civil Defense receive more than passing concern. Future studies should replicate the design for key time periods in the past. Thus questions about when and why major perspective changes have happened can be answered. For example, when did America give up its quest for superiority and accept casually the risks of nuclear conflict.

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